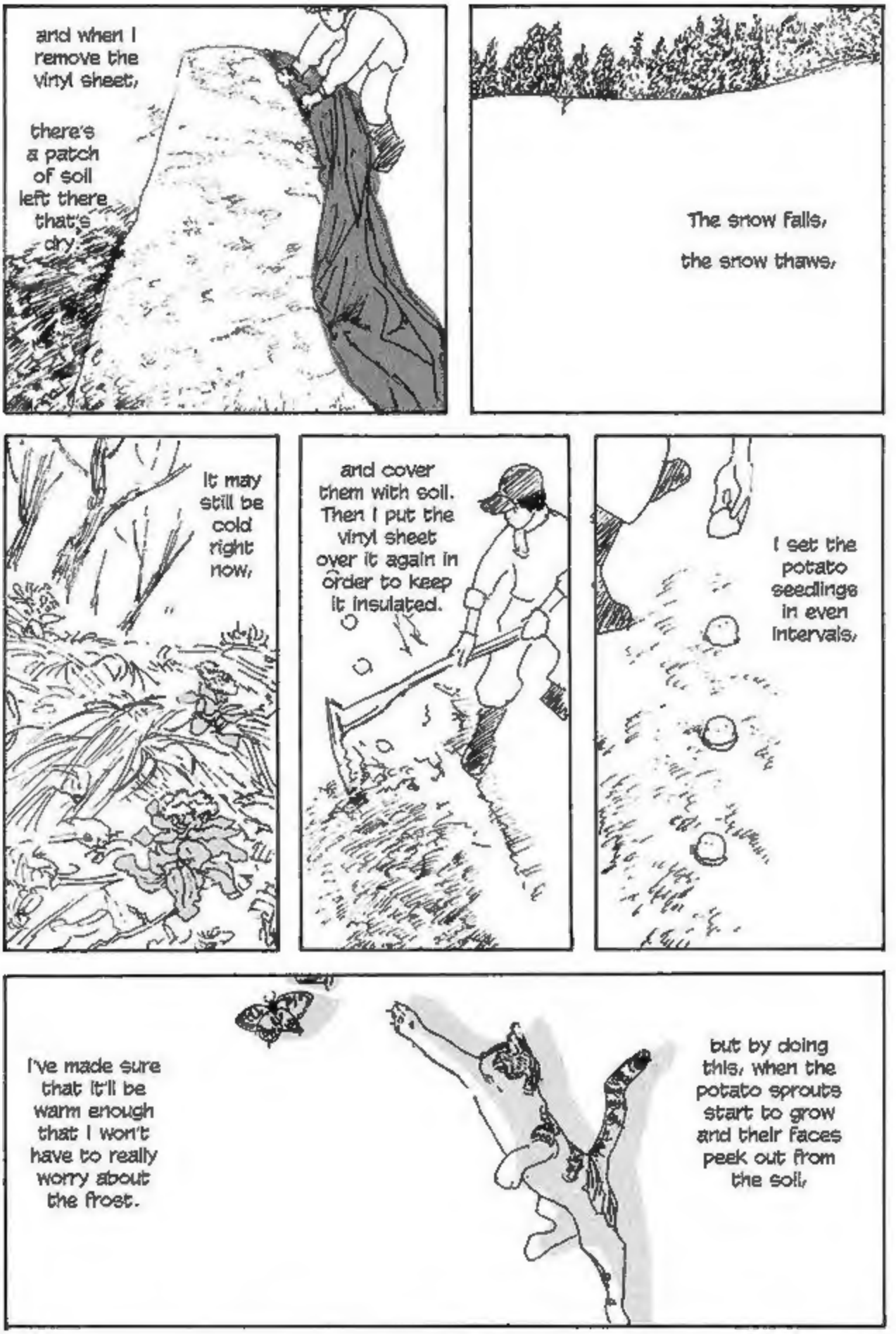
Little Forest

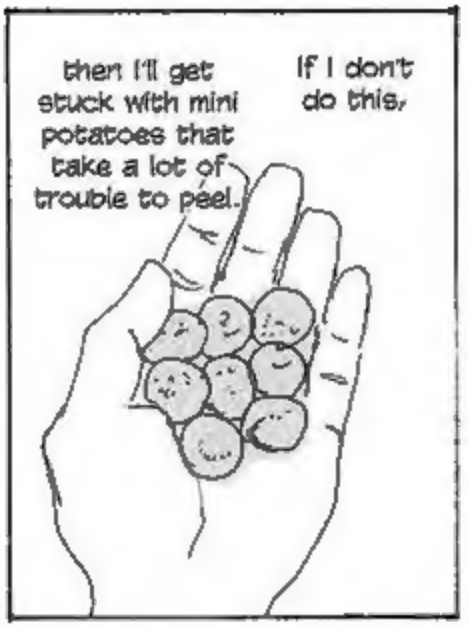
リトル・フォレスト

31st dish

Pain à la Pomme de Terre

and then covered it with an agricultural grade vinyl sheet.
That's why, before the snow fell last year, I ploughed the field, and got everything ready so that I could plant them right away.

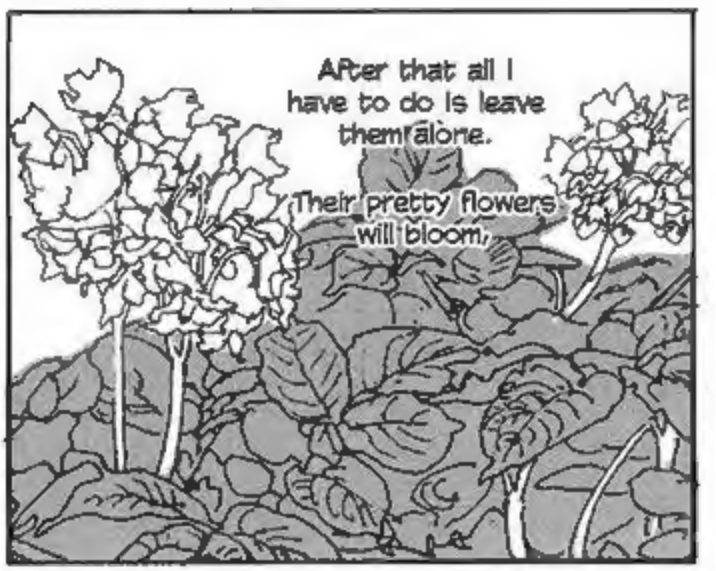

and when I remove the vinyl sheet,
there's a patch of soil left there that's dry.
The snow falls,
the snow thaws,
It may still be cold right now,
and cover them with soil. Then I put the vinyl sheet over it again in order to keep it insulated.
I set the potato seedlings in even intervals,
I've made sure that it'll be warm enough that I won't have to really worry about the frost.
but by doing this, when the potato sprouts start to grow and their faces peek out from the soil,


If I don't do this,
then I'll get stuck with mini potatoes that take a lot of trouble to peel.

For the sprouts that come budding out one by one,
I prune them so that three or four are left on each plant.

Just to be safe, I spread out the planting season, and split up the planting into multiple sessions.

and once the stem and leaves start to droop, that's when they should be harvested.

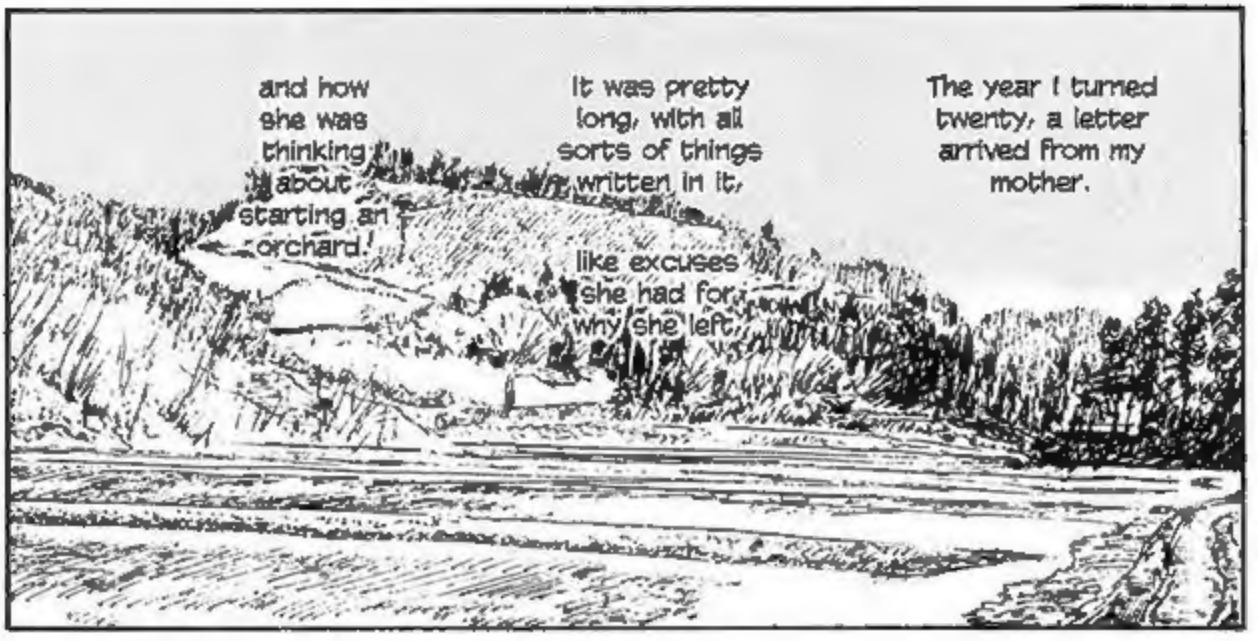

After that all I have to do is leave them alone.
Their pretty flowers will bloom,

sprinkle some salt on top and eat 'em while they're still piping hot.
They're warm, soft, and sweet.
Or...

I boil the new potatoes right away,

It's one of the entrees in my standard menu for breakfast.
acid salt, pepper, shredded onions, some dressing mixed with oil,
together with the boiled potatoes that I cut into bite sizes, and make a salad.
I pick some of the watercress that has been growing around the ditches,
Light, fluffy, and faintly sweet. It was one of the dishes that my mother was always proud of.
There's a secret to it.
Mom
The dough contains mashed up potatoes.
Then there's pain à la pomme de terre, potato bread.
It still needs something.
Though it's pretty good as it is.
She was right. No matter how much I tried, I was unable to make it as fluffy.
Why don't you try making it? I guarantee you that it won't turn out like this.

That's super unfair!
Okay. I'll let you in on all the details after you turn twenty.
The ingredients and their proportions are completely secret.


and how she was thinking about starting an orchard!
It was pretty long, with all sorts of things written in it,
like excuses she had for why she left.
The year I turned twenty, a letter arrived from my mother.

before I knew it, I came up with my own recipe for potato bread that was different than my mother's.
But she didn't include her recipe for pain à la pomme de terre.
That's why, though I still don't know how my mother made it.

I pack them into a cardboard box.

and let them dry thoroughly in the shade.

After harvesting the potatoes, I make sure that there's no sunlight hitting them.

In short,

as long as I trim them off quickly, I can keep eating them 'til spring.

If I happen to open a box and find buds growing,

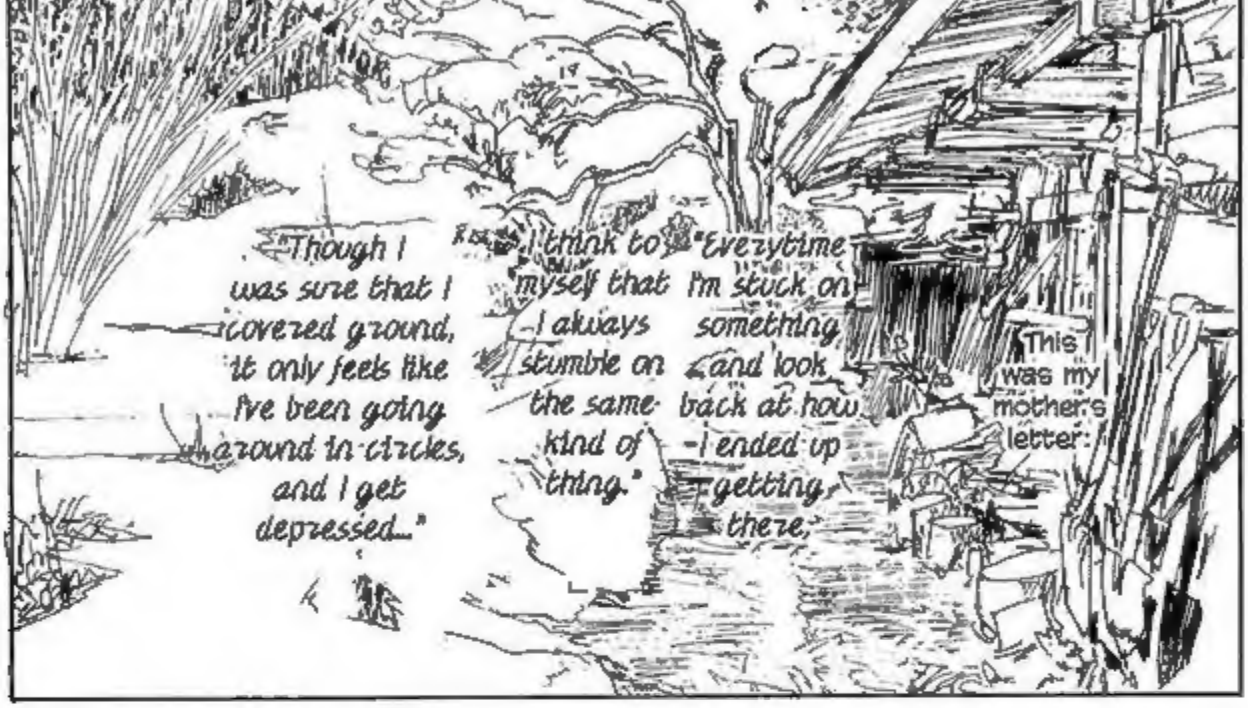
and they're a valuable food source during the winter.

After all, potatoes keep well.

Living in Komori is a repetition of that.

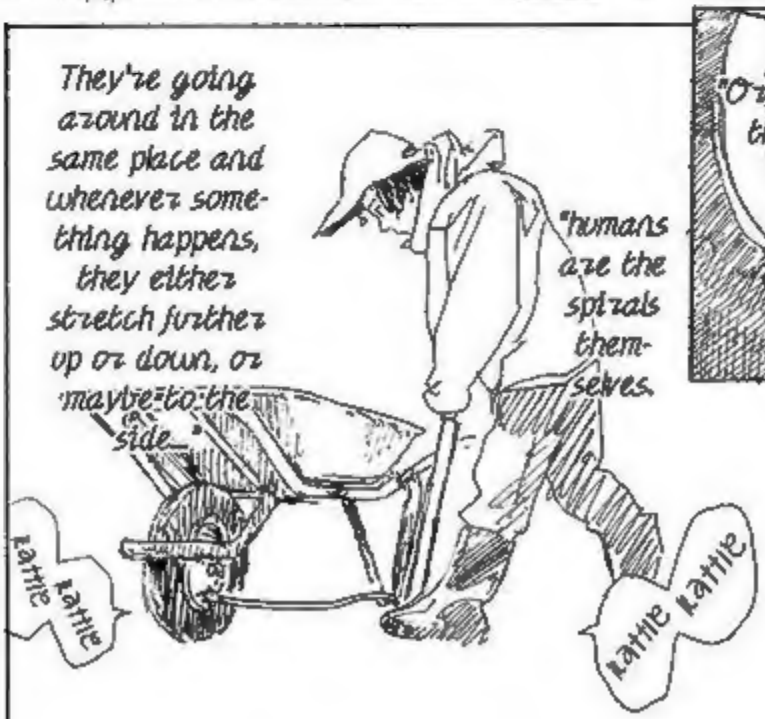
the first thing to do after winter is over,

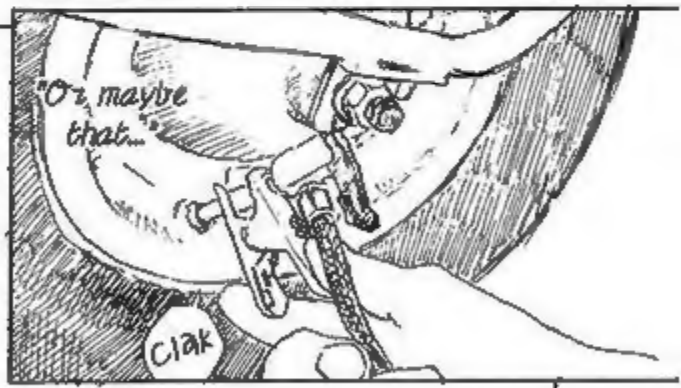
is prepare food for the next winter.


"Though I was sure that I covered ground, it only feels like I've been going around in circles, and I get depressed..."
I think to myself that I always stumble on the same kind of thing."
"Everytime I'm stuck on something and look back at how I ended up getting there,
This was my mother's letter:

and I guess that'd be better than before..."
I definitely have to be moving a little bit up or down,
"Even if it... appears that I'm going around in the same place,

"So I thought, then it's not a circle, it's a spiral."
"...But I've gained experience from all of that, so whether I fail or succeed, there's no way I'm in the exact same place, is there?"


They're going around in the same place and whenever something happens, they either stretch further up or down, or maybe to the side..."
"humans are the spirals themselves.
Rattle Rattle
Rattle Rattle

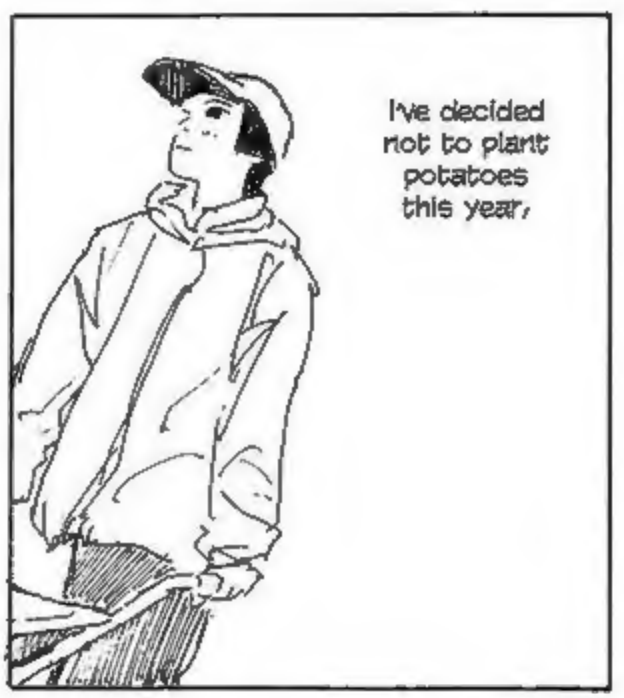

"Or maybe that..."
Clak

And if I think about it that way, I feel like I'm able to try a bit harder.
and by doing that the spiral must gradually get bigger as well...
The circle that I draw gets larger and expands.

Though I've done all the preparations for the fields,

...When I first read that, I didn't really understand what she was talking about, but now...

because I won't be here next winter.


I've decided not to plant potatoes this year.

Potato plant flowers

The seed store had all sorts of different varieties of potato seedlings lined up, like red potatoes and purple potatoes, so I tried planting some of each. They're tasty but I felt like they sprouted way too quickly.

I think the methods you're supposed to use to store them vary by the breed, but it might have just been that I didn't store them very well.

Pain à la Pomme de Terre

A	*Boiled Potatoes*	*150 g*
	Flour	*250 g*
	Instant Yeast	*1 ½ teaspoon*
	Skim Milk	*1 tablespoon*
	Salt	*1 teaspoon*
	Sugar	*50 g*
	Egg	*1*
	Water	*80 cc*
	Butter	*30 g*

1

Mix everything in A together.

Add the egg and the water and knead well. Make adjustments for the amount of water.

2.

Add the butter and knead well. Let it ferment while being careful not to let it dry out.

3

Once it gets to twice its size, split it into four equal parts, shape into balls, and then let rest for twenty minutes.

4

Get rid of the gas and shape it again. This is the final proof.

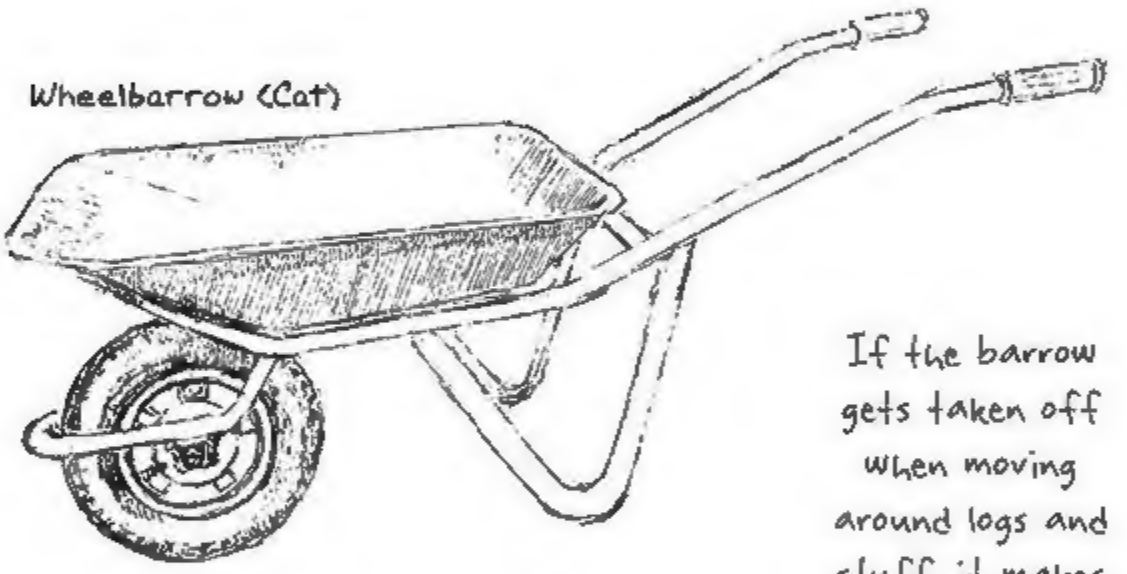
5

Score it and bake it in an oven at 220 C for 20~30 minutes.

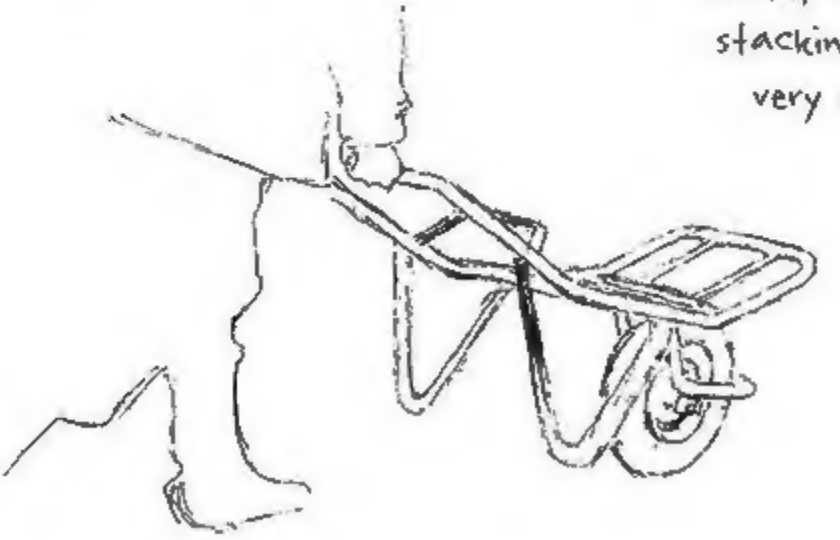
If you brush milk or yogurt on the surface before you bake it, it'll end up with a nice color.

From crops to farming tools, fertilizer, baggage, and garbage... you can carry it all in this. Even if it's piled with heavy things, it can still make small turns with the tire as its fulcrum. It's incredibly useful.

Wheelbarrow (Cat)



If the barrow gets taken off when moving around logs and stuff, it makes stacking them very easy.



T/N: Wheelbarrows are also called "cats" [neko]

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